

REMARKS

Claims 1-21 were presented for examination. Claims 1-13, 15 and 21 were rejected. Claims 14 and 16-20 were allowed. Applicants are hereby amending claims 11-13 and canceling claims 1-10, 15 and 21 without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter. Support for all amendments is found in the specification as originally filed. Reconsideration of this application as amended, and allowance of all pending claims are hereby respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-13, 15 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as allegedly anticipated by Shinomiya et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,259,901 B1). Regarding claims 1-10, 15 and 21, this rejection is moot in view of Applicants' canceling of these claims without prejudice or disclaimer.

Regarding claims 11-13, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of these claims. In the Office Action mailed June 28, 2004, the Examiner indicated that claims 11-13 included allowable subject matter, but objected to these claims as dependent on a rejected base claim. In the present Office Action, the Examiner has not set forth any specific reasons why these claims should not be considered allowable. Applicants have amended claims 11-13 to incorporate the subject matter of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection imposed on claims 11-13, as these claims have been placed in condition for allowance.

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Conclusion

Accordingly, it is believed that all pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Applicants therefore respectfully requests an early and favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application. If there are any outstanding issues which might be resolved by an interview or an Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' representative at the telephone number shown below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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